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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 61st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 105: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

1. Mr. SCOTTI (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union and supported by Mr. SHARP (Australia), Mr. CARMICHAEL (Canada), Mr. JU Kuilin (China), Mr. MOSOLO (Lesotho) and Mr. AMARI (Tunisia), expressed shock and dismay at the recent press criticism of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The European Union did not share the perception of the functioning of the Advisory Committee reflected in the article in question and wished to reiterate its support for the Advisory Committee and its Chairman. The latter's re-election to membership of the Advisory Committee by the General Assembly and to the chairmanship of that Committee by its membership was ample testimony to the confidence placed in him.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that he was shocked by the tendentious nature of the article carried in The New York Times of 23 June 1995. The response of the Committee, the Secretariat and all those who worked on behalf of the Organization should be to close ranks and assume their respective responsibilities fully in order to ensure that the Advisory Committee's work was not adversely affected.

AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued) (A/C.5/49/63 and A/C.5/49/64)

3. Mr. HALLIDAY (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the revised costs of staff representation activities during the biennium 1990-1991 (A/C.5/49/63) was being submitted in accordance with the request contained in General Assembly resolution 49/222 that the Secretary-General should issue a corrigendum to his report on the costs of staff representation activities (A/C.5/47/59). The report before the Committee contained the most recent information provided by the various duty stations. The amounts were the actual costs of the full-time release of senior members of Staff Councils from their substantive duties, together with the cost of Secretariat support.

4. The Committee had expressed concern over the lack of a clear definition of "a reasonable amount of time" for the conduct of staff activities. Such clarity would permit staff representatives to make better use of the time available to them for Staff Council activities, which should not be to the detriment of their own career objectives.

5. At the recently concluded nineteenth session of the Staff-Management Coordinating Committee (SMCC) held at Amman, Jordan, both management and staff representatives had acknowledged that it had been difficult in the past to keep track of the time which staff representatives devoted to staff activities, and had reached agreement on what constituted "a reasonable amount of time" for staff representatives at all levels in the nine major duty stations effectively to discharge their responsibilities. Management and staff had also stressed the

value of consultations with each other and the contribution made by each to the work of the Organization.

6. It would be premature for him to introduce the report formally, as the Secretary-General had not yet had a chance to consider it. He would, however, be happy to share whatever additional information he had with the Committee during informal consultations.

7. Mrs. GRAHAM (United States of America) noted with satisfaction that the Bureau had heeded the comments made at the previous meeting about the documents under consideration. It was important not to let the current year go by without giving full consideration to an issue which had both budgetary and policy implications. Her delegation looked forward to more in-depth consideration of the documents during informal consultations.

8. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), supported by Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), said that her Government supported staff representation and was particularly gratified to note that relations between staff and management were becoming more transparent. It was important for the Secretary-General to keep channels of communication open with his staff in order to ensure their participation in matters pertaining to staff welfare, thereby contributing to the smooth functioning of the Organization.

9. As staff members of the Organization, staff representatives enjoyed the same benefits and were subject to the same obligations as other staff. They must therefore fulfil their obligations to the Organization even as they defended the welfare of the staff. Questions of mobility, accountability, performance and performance appraisal applied to staff representatives in the same way as they did to other staff. She hoped that the recent meeting of SMCC would help to bring about a more productive relationship between the management and staff of the Organization.

10. The CHAIRMAN said that the item would be considered in informal consultations the following week.

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)
(A/49/717 and Corr.1-2 and A/49/904)

11. Mr. HOSANG (Director, Peace-keeping Financing Division) recalled that, in its decision 49/469 concerning the support account for peace-keeping operations, the General Assembly had authorized, for the period from 1 January to 30 June 1995, 346 established posts in the amount of \$14,105,900. It had further authorized, for a period of six months, \$86,000 under general temporary assistance for the position of Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, and also resources for a period of three months for overtime, travel on official business, training and general temporary assistance. Since the authorizations were due to expire that day, the Secretary-General was requesting their extension for the month of July, pending consideration of the item by the Committee at its current resumed session.

12. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

"The General Assembly

Decides to maintain the current level of resources approved under the support account for peace-keeping operations for the month of July 1995."

13. The draft decision was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

14. Mr. SHARP (Australia) noted from the tentative programme of work that there was still a long list of issues pending on the agenda of the resumed forty-ninth session. It was therefore an opportune time to review the decision taken in December 1991 regarding the rationalization of the work of the Fifth Committee and the biennialization of its programme of work.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that he had prepared a conference room paper on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations which contained proposals for changing the Committee's pattern of work, including the question of biennialization. That paper would be discussed in informal consultations the following week.

The meeting rose at 11.00 a.m.